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# STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

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## Acreage Prospects Slightly Below Year Ago

Acreages of the 52 principal crops to be planted or grown in 1952, allowing for numerous crops not yet surveyed, are estimated in March to total over 361.5 million acres—less than a million acres smaller than in 1951.

## For Feed Grains, Below Goals

Feed grain acreage March 1 was indicated below 1951 by 1.5 million acres. At average yields, by States, this would mean a production of 121 million tons, compared with 114 million produced in 1951. Corn acreage was indicated 94 percent of goal, barley 76 percent, all sorghums 88 percent, and oats 103 percent.

## Spring Acreage Estimates Not Final

Total for 16 spring-planted crops is indicated at 271.8 million acres, based on farmers prospective plans in March. This would be short of a year ago, for the 16 crops, by about a million acres. But many farmers change their acreage plans after studying the March prospective plantings report, main purpose of which is to assist farmers in making plans for the year's acreage.

## Prospective Acreages and Percentage Comparisons With 1951 and Goal <sup>1/</sup>

	1952 (Thousands)	Percent of 1951	Percent of goal
Corn, all	83,928	100	94
Spring Wheat	21,998	99	---
Oats	42,818	103	103
Barley	9,752	90	76
Flaxseed	3,935	96	98
Rice	1,971	99	101
Sorghums	13,442	89	88
Potatoes	1,373	100	93
Sweetpotatoes	334	105	71
Tobacco <sup>2/</sup>	1,804	101	---
Beans, dry edible	1,414	93	87
Peas, dry field	267	83	---
Soybeans <sup>3/</sup>	15,457	104	---
Peanuts <sup>3/</sup>	2,158	83	---
Hay	75,380	101	101
Sugar beets	747	98	---

<sup>1/</sup> 16 spring-planted crops. <sup>2/</sup> Acreage harvested.

<sup>3/</sup> Grown alone, all purposes.

## Certain Factors Affect Changes

Weather can prove a major factor in acreage changes. Changes this year may be limited on account of the small abandonment so far this spring of winter wheat. Large acreage was sown last fall; and with light abandonment, less additional acreage than last year is available for seeding spring crops. Labor requirements also affect changes; tendency this year is toward crops requiring a minimum of labor. Strong desire to retain and increase hay and grassland acreage.

## Activities Normal; Moisture Satisfactory

Spring farming activities were about normal on March 1, weather, so far, having caused little delay. Soil moisture was generally satisfactory, though only temporarily adequate in parts of the Southwest. Irrigation water supplies generally promise to be the best in recent years.

## Farming Improvements Favor High Yields

Corn hybrids, new high-yielding, disease resistant strains of grains and oilseeds, new insecticides, and

chemical weed-killers, wider use of fertilizers and more timely operations resulting from mechanization all help to maintain the upward trend of yields in recent years... Machinery appears ample. Seed supplies, for grains, hybrid corn, grass and hay crops are mostly ample. Local shortages have been relieved by shipments from other areas.

## Shortage of Tenants in the South

For the spring planting season labor will be mostly adequate. Some land in the South, however, may be idle, or put into grass, because of a shortage of tenants.

## 3.2 Billion Bushels of Corn Indicated

On the basis of prospective plantings and average yields by States 1948-51 average, corn production this year would approximate 3.2 billion bushels. This would top last year by 9 percent; average by 6 percent.

## Sorghum Grain Production

Based on past experience a production of 143 million bushels of sorghum grain would be expected this year from the prospective acreage. Takes into account the usual proportion of acreage harvested for grain, allowance for trend, and average per-acre yields. The 1951 production was 159 million bushels; 10 year average, 132 million bushels.

## Oats Crop Might Reach 1.3 Billion

About 1.3 billion bushels of oats might be expected from this year's prospective acreage, if average (1946-50) yields are attained. This would be slightly above both last year and the 10-year average.

## Barley Production

Barley production on prospective acreage, at 1946-50 average yields, by States, would total about 235 million bushels. This would compare with 255 million last year and 306 million average.

## PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Jan. 15 1952	Feb. 15 1952	Feb. 15 1952
Wheat, bu. ....dol.	2.20	2.18	2.46
Corn, bu. ....dol.	1.68	1.66	1.78
Peanuts, lb. ....ct.	10.4	10.4	13.3
Cotton, lb. ....ct.	38.70	37.25	34.47
Potatoes, bu. ....dol.	2.07	2.05	1.73
Hogs, 100 lb. ....dol.	17.40	17.20	21.60
Beef cattle, 100 lb. ...dol.	27.20	27.60	21.20
Veal calves, 100 lb. ...dol.	31.50	31.90	23.80
Lambs, 100 lb. ....dol.	28.20	26.80	23.30
Butterfat, lb. ....ct.	<sup>1/</sup> 76.9	<sup>1/</sup> 80.9	76.9
Milk, whsle., 100 lb. ...dol.	<sup>1/</sup> 4.83	<sup>1/2/</sup> 4.96	4.84
Chickens, live, lb. ....ct.	25.1	25.7	30.8
Eggs, doz. ....ct.	<sup>1/</sup> 40.9	<sup>1/</sup> 39.8	50.8

<sup>1/</sup> Adjusted for seasonal variation.

<sup>2/</sup> Preliminary.



### Food Grains, Little Change in Acreage

Little change from 1951 is noted in total acreage prospects for food grains. All wheat acreage, including the 56.3 million acres of winter wheat sown last fall, is indicated at 100 percent of goal; rice, 101 percent.

### Wheat Estimate about 1.2 Billion Bushels

Production of all spring wheat may be about 307 million bushels, if intended acreage is planted and if yields per seeded acre should be the same as the 1946-50 average. Adding the December winter wheat crop forecast of 918 million bushels brings all wheat estimate to about 1.2 billion.

### Rice Indicated Close to 1951 Production

Rice crop would total 43 million bags (100 lb.) based on prospective acreage and 1946-50 average yields. This would compare with 43.8 million bags produced in '51.

### Oilseeds Acreage, Little Change

Acreage for oilseeds will be little changed from 1951 in total, but there will be some shifts among the individual crops.

### Flax, Peanuts, Soybeans Acreage

Flax acreage will be reduced from last year in virtually all States, Texas being the chief exception. Peanuts grown alone may be reduced about a sixth. Increases are indicated for soybeans grown alone, amounting to about 4 percent. Total grown alone would be 15.5 million acres, a new high record.

### Small Peanut Crop Indicated

Peanut crop, at prospective acreage and average yields, would total 1,360 million pounds, compared with 1,595 million last year (picked and threshed). It would be smallest production since 1939.

### Production of Soybeans

If 1946-50 average yields of soybeans are attained, by States, some 272 million bushels would be produced on the prospective acreage. This estimate counts the same proportion of acreage harvested for beans as in 1950 and '51. Such production would be 3 percent below 1951 and 9 percent below the 1950 record crop.

### Larger Hay Acreage

Hay acreage is nearly 1 percent larger than last year's big acreage. With the average prospective carry-over, liberal hay supplies are in prospect.

### Another Small Potato Acreage

A relatively small acreage of Irish potatoes is in prospect, 6,000 acres less than last year. But acreage indicated is 93 percent of goal. Assuming 1949-51 average yields, about 334 million bushels would be produced on the prospective acreage...up a little from last year's crop of 326 million bushels. Sweetpotato acreage shows a small increase over last year but is estimated at only 71 percent of goal. At 1946-50 average yields, a crop of about 32 million bushels would be produced...14 percent above last year.

### Dry Peas and Beans

At average 1946-50 yields, this year's prospective acreage of dry field peas would produce about 3 million bags (100-lb.), down three-fourths million from last year, and slightly below 1950. Dry beans would total 14.8 million bags on prospective acreage, if per-acre yields are the same as the 1946-50 average.

### Production of Sugar Beets

Some 9.5 million tons of sugar beets would be produced this year on the prospective acreage if the yields approximate the 1946-50 average. Production last year was 10.6 million tons.

### Indications For Tobacco

With per acre yields equal to the 1946-50 average,

tobacco production on the prospective acreage would total about 2.2 billion pounds. This would compare with about 2.3 billion last year. No official estimate until July.

### Oranges and Grapefruit

For the country as a whole, orange production will top last season by about 1 percent, and will exceed average by nearly a fifth. Grapefruit will be about one-eighth below last season, and a fifth less than average. Record crops of both oranges and grapefruit, of very good quality are being harvested in Florida, as improvement followed ideal citrus weather in February. Trees are heavy with bloom for the 1952-53 crop.

### Record Egg Production

Farm poultry flocks continued to produce at a record rate per hen. With 3 percent more layers than a year ago, farmers produced 5.7 billion eggs in February, 10 percent higher than last year and a new record for the month.

### Big Hatch of Chicks

More than 190 million chicks were produced in commercial hatcheries in February, largest output for the month on record. Output was 18 percent above February last year and topped the 1945-50 average by 53 percent.

### Milk Production Tops Year Ago

The 8.7 billion pounds of milk produced in February was up 2 percent from year ago. Output per cow on March 1 was relatively high, exceeded only in the last two seasons, on that date.

### Prices Received and Paid

At 289 percent of the 1910-14 average, prices received by farmers at mid-February were down 11 index points from mid-January and 24 points from a year earlier. Prices paid by farmers (including interest, taxes, and farm wage rates) were up 1 index point from January and 12 index points from February last year. Parity ratio mid-February was 100, down 5 points from January and 13 points from February year ago.

### Employment Up Nearly A million, In Year

Civilian employment in February totaled 59.8 million compared with only 58.9 million at work a year ago. Unemployed in February totaled 2.1 million compared with 2.4 million without work a year ago.

### CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE

INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	February 1952
Prices received by farmers....	'10-14=100	289
Prices paid by farmers, interest, taxes & farm wage rates.	'10-14=100	288
Parity ratio.....	'10-14=100	100
Wholesale prices of food.....	'10-14=100	1/ 287
Retail prices of food.....	'10-14=100	2/ 300
Farm wage rates.....	'10-14=100	3/ 498
Weekly factory earnings.....	'10-14=100	2/ 582
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Feb. 1951	Jan.-Feb. 1952
Milk, (bil. lb.).....	17.5	17.5
Eggs, (bil.).....	10.2	11.1
Beef, (dr. wt., mil. lb.).....	4/ 641.8	4/ 613.7
Lamb & mutton (dr. wt., mil. lb.)	4/ 50.2	4/ 50.5
Pork & lard (mil. lb.).....	4/ 1237.6	4/ 1269.8
All meats (dr. wt., mil. lb.)....	4/ 1974.8	4/ 1976.6
1/ Week ended nearest 15th of the month.		
2/ January figure.		
3/ January 1 adjusted for seasonal variation.		
4/ January total under Federal Inspection.		